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BAT MAN
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# BurgerTime™*

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"Graphics vary by system."

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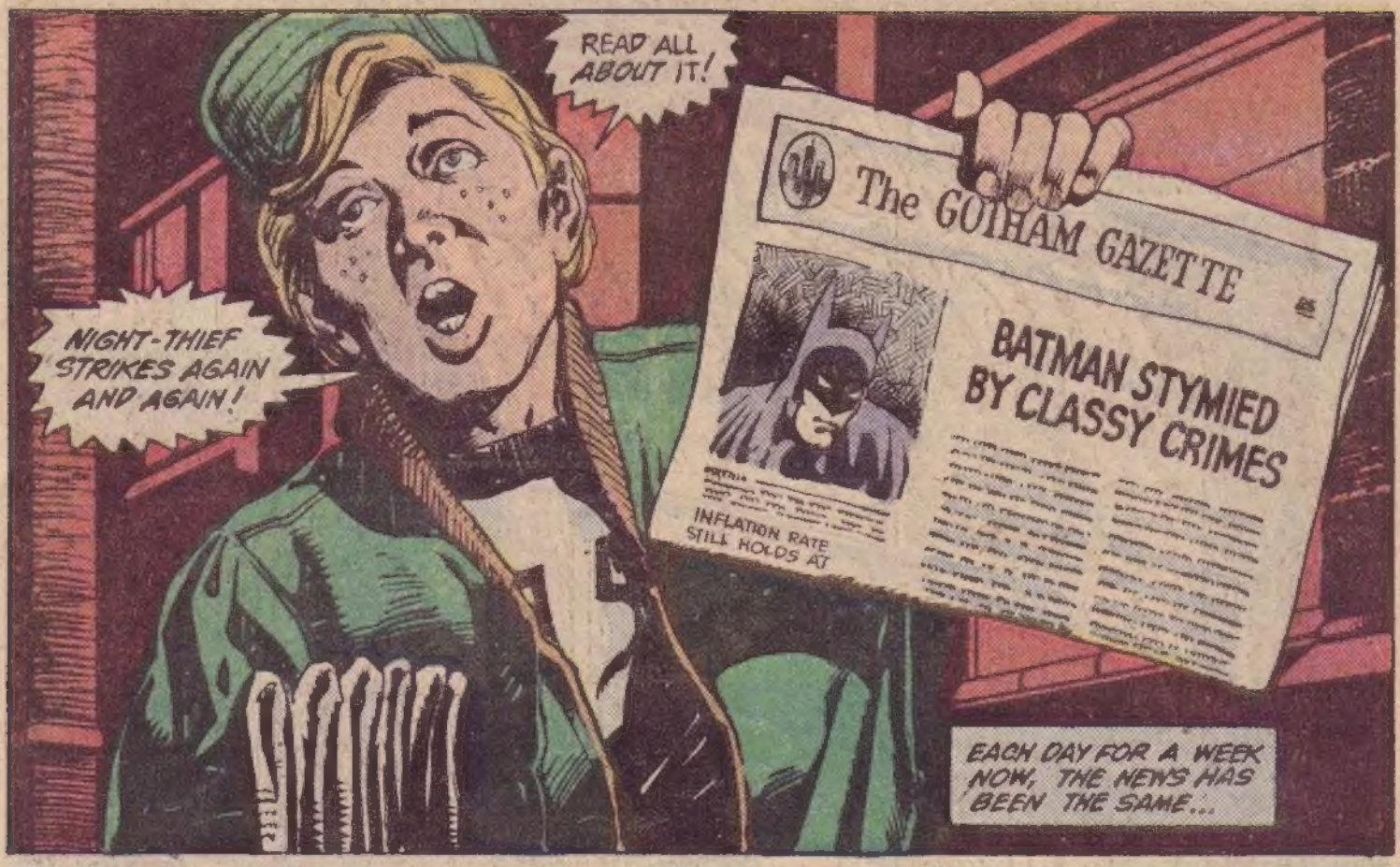
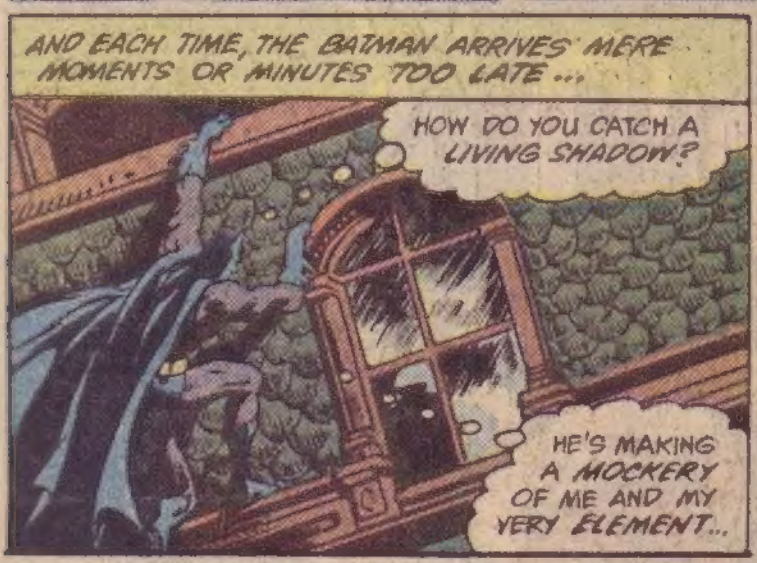
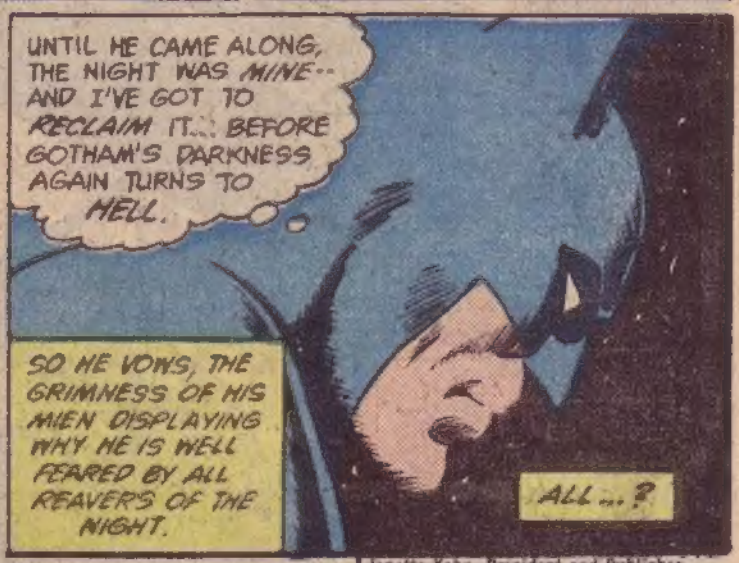

READ ALL ABOUT IT!
NIGHT-THIEF STRIKES AGAIN AND AGAIN!
The GOTHAM GAZETTE
BATMAN STYMIED BY CLASSY CRIMES
INFLATION RATE STILL HOLDS AT
EACH DAY FOR A WEEK NOW, THE NEWS HAS BEEN THE SAME...


AND EACH TIME, THE BATMAN ARRIVES MERE MOMENTS OR MINUTES TOO LATE...
HOW DO YOU CATCH A LIVING SHADOW?
HE'S MAKING A MOCKERY OF ME AND MY VERY ELEMENT...


UNTIL HE CAME ALONG, THE NIGHT WAS MINE-- AND I'VE GOT TO RECLAIM IT... BEFORE GOTHAM'S DARKNESS AGAIN TURNS TO HELL.
SO HE VOWS, THE GRIMNESS OF HIS MIEN DISPLAYING WHY HE IS WELL FEARED BY ALL REAVERS OF THE NIGHT.
ALL...?

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NOT QUITE -- AS THESE TWO DENIZENS OF A PLUSH TOWNHOUSE TESTIFY, QUIETLY EXULTING IN THE FRUITS OF THEIR...
A NEW TALE OF MENACE AND MOOD IN THE ANNALS OF THE DARKNIGHT DETECTIVE KNOWN AS --
Elegant NIGHT CRIMES
BAT-MAN
I HAVE RETURNED FROM THE DARKNESS, MY MISTRESS OF THE NIGHT, BEARING GIFTS FIT FOR YOUR BEAUTY.
SO YOU HAVE, ANTON. YOU ARE A MOST APPRECIATIVE SUITOR...
I DO IT ALL FOR LOVE -- I DO IT ALL FOR YOU, NOCTURNA.
AND THE PALE CREATURE WHO IS NOCTURNA SHAPES HER LIPS INTO THE GHOST OF A SMILE. REMOTE AND LANGUID, SHE IS ELUSIVE AND MELANCHOLY... ETHEREAL AND BEWITCHING.
HER WHITE FLESH SHEATHED IN BLACK SATIN, SHE IS A HAUNTING PARADOX. MYSTERIOUS AND SEDUCTIVE, SHE IS NIGHT.
SHE IS NOCTURNA.
DOUG MOENCH WRITER
DON NEWTON ARTIST
ALFREDO ALCALA INKER
BEN ODA.....LETTERER
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THEN YOU ARE PLEASED, MY LOVE?
AS PLEASED AS YOU ARE, ANTON.
...ALTHOUGH I BEGIN TO SUSPECT YOUR PLEASURE DERIVES AS MUCH FROM OUTWITTING THE BATMAN AS IT DOES FROM PLEASING ME.
I CANNOT DENY THE SPICE, NOCTURNA.
BUT WHAT SHALL WE DO NEXT?
THE SAME, ANTON... WE SHALL MAINTAIN THE STANDARDS TO WHICH WE HAVE BECOME ACCUSTOMED.
BREATHING THE NIGHT, HER FACE MIRRORING THE MOON, SHE GAZES DREAMILY AT THE DESIGNS OF FATE STITCHED BY THE STARS...
NEXT... I THINK IT IS TIME TO TEACH MY EMPLOYERS A LESSON... AND COLLECT PAYMENTS DUE...
...AT AN ELEGANT SOIREE SLATED FOR SATURDAY NIGHT.
FRIDAY: THE PHOTO DEPARTMENT OF PICTURE NEWS...
SO WHAT ABOUT THE SHINDIG AT WAYNE MANOR TOMORROW NIGHT? ARE YOU GOING, VICKI?
NO.
TOO MUCH WORK?
BRUCE WAYNE AND I ARE NOT SPEAKING THESE DAYS... OR NIGHTS.
OH.
UM... I'LL BE IN EDITORIAL IF YOU NEED ME.
Invitation
BUT SPEAKING OR NOT, THE MAN COULD HAVE PHONED AND ASKED ME... INSTEAD OF JUST SENDING AN INVITATION.
3

POLICE HEADQUARTERS...
A PIECE OF SWISS CHEESE...
... INSIDE AN EGG...
STILL CAN'T GET OVER THAT HEARING OF YOURS, BULLOCK.
EEPS!
IF I WEREN'T ALREADY COMMISSIONER, I'D ALMOST SWEAR YOU WERE TRYING TO GET ME PROMOTED.
FIGURE OUT THE RIDDLE YET?
NOPE... NOPE, I DIDN'T... BUT I DID REARRANGE YER OFFICE FOR BETTER EFFICIENCY, GORDON.
EH--?
LOOK FOR YERSELF.
GOOD LORD!
THIS IS LOW... THIS IS INSUFFERABLY LOW... EVEN FOR A NEANDERTHAL LIKE HARVEY BULLOCK!
HEY, COMMISH, WHEN YA GET A CHANCE, BRING ME OUT THE RIDDLER FILE, WILLYA? IT'S IN THERE SOMEWHERES-- UNDER "Q" OR WAS IT "E"?
ANYWAYS, I WANNA ADD SOME NOTES ON MY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CASE.
REMEMBER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE-- AND DON'T PLAY INTO HIS HAM-FISTED HANDS.
ONE... TWO... THREE... FOUR... FIVE...
4

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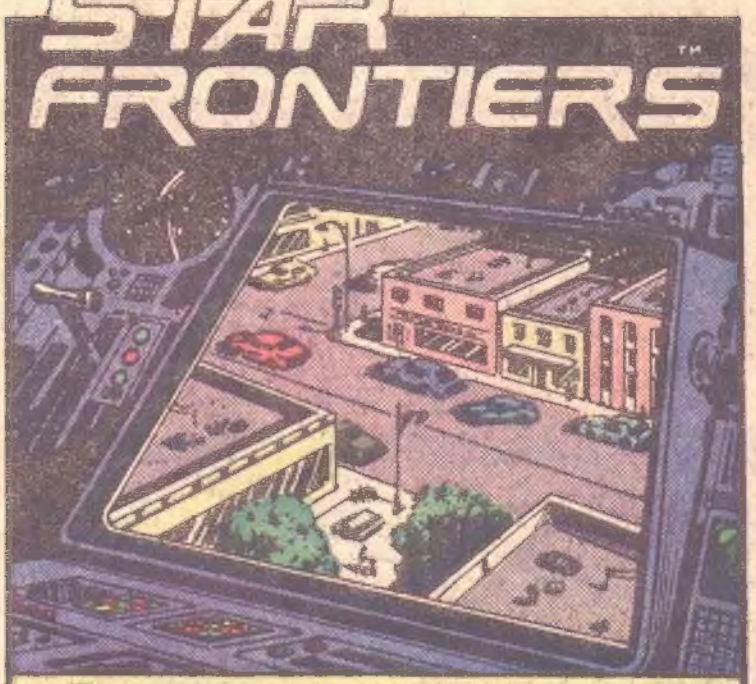
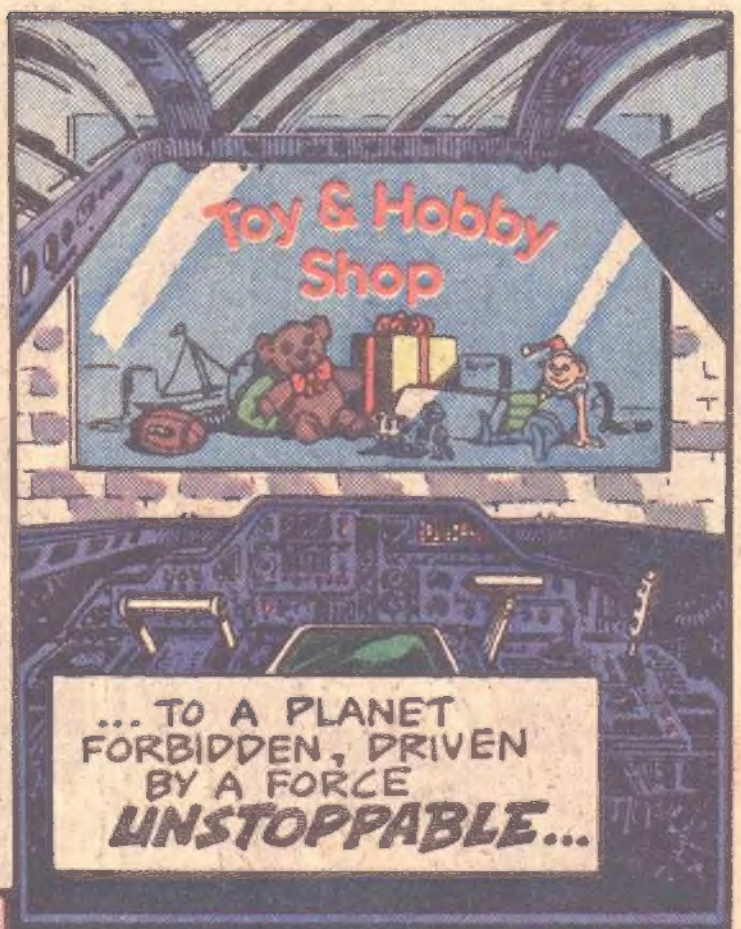
# STAR FRONTIERS™



...FROM THE VERY CENTER OF THE GREAT SPIRAL GALAXY... ON A QUEST WITH BUT ONE INTENTION...




... TO A PLANET FORBIDDEN, DRIVEN BY A FORCE **UNSTOPPABLE...**

...NOT KNOWING **WHY**- BUT PROGRAMED TO PURCHASE...

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SATURDAY EVENING: WAYNE MANOR...
CAN'T KEEP MY MIND ON THE PARTY -- CAN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT ANYTHING EXCEPT CAPTURING THE NIGHT-THIEF ONCE AND FOR ALL...

I WISH I COULD HAVE CANCELED THE ENTIRE EVENING, BUT LUCIUS HAS LONG SINCE MADE ALL THE PREPARATIONS...

AND AS LONG AS THE PARTY MUST GO ON, WHY COULDN'T VICKI HAVE AGREED TO COME?
WHAT A MESS -- CAN'T CATCH THE THIEF AND CAN'T KEEP MY GIRL...

REMEMBER, MASTER JAY, YOU MUST BE IN BED BY THE TIME THE PARTY BEGINS --
--AND YOU MUST STAY THERE.
IF I CAN'T BE A PART OF OF THE BATMAN'S LIFE, WHAT MAKES ME THINK I CAN BE A PART OF BRUCE WAYNE'S LIFE?

WHAT WAS THAT YOU MUMBLED, JAY?
NOTHING, ALFRED. I THINK I'LL GO PHONE MY PAL MALDO -- HE'S GOING BACK TO THE CIRCUS IN A FEW DAYS, AND I STILL MIGHT GO WITH HIM.
OH, DEAR -- WHY CAN'T MATTERS BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE TWO MASTERS?

AN HOUR LATER, THE DRIVEWAY IS CHOKED WITH SLEEK LUXURY...

...WHILE INSIDE, THE BANK ACCOUNTS ARE ALMOST AUDIBLE...
NATASHA KNIGHT, PLEASE MEET YOUR EMPLOYER, BRUCE WAYNE.
BRUCE, NATASHA IS HEAD OF THE OBSERVATORY WHOSE FUNDING THE WAYNE FOUNDATION HAS ASSUMED.
MY PLEASURE, MS. KNIGHT.

AND, AS LUCIUS FOX DRIFTS AWAY...
A LOVELY NIGHT, MS... AH... KNIGHT.
ALL NIGHTS ARE WONDROUS, MR. WAYNE -- THEY ARE THE CLOAK WHICH ADORNS MYSTERY WITH ITS ELEGANCE.
MYSTERY?
INDEED. FOR INSTANCE, RIGHT NOW YOU'RE FASCINATED BY MY PALLOR.
AN ODD WAY TO PHRASE IT...
NEVERTHELESS, THE WHITENESS OF MY SKIN AGAINST THE BLACK MANTLE OF NIGHT POSES AN INTRIGUING MYSTERY TO YOU.
IN THE HARSH LIGHT OF DAY, IT WOULD BE MERELY AN ODDITY -- AND PERHAPS A GROTESQUE ONE.
I FAIL TO SEE HOW ANY SURFACE COLOR COULD TAINT YOUR BEAUTY, MS. KNIGHT.
YOU'VE JUST EARNED THE RIGHT TO CALL ME NATASHA.
AND YOU SEE--?
NOCTURNAL CHARM TRIUMPHS OVER DAYLIGHT AMENITY EVERY TIME.
--SO GLAD YOU CHANGED YOUR MIND AND DECIDED TO COME, MS. VALE. MAY I TAKE YOUR WRAP?
YES, ALFRED, YOU--
BRUCE--AND ANOTHER WOMAN.
THEN THERE IS SOMEONE ELSE, DESPITE ALL HIS PROTESTS TO THE CONTRARY.
NO, THANK YOU, ALFRED -- MY ORIGINAL INSTINCTS WERE CORRECT!
UH... QUITE, MS. VALE.
6

--AND YET, HAVE YOU NEVER APPRECIATED THE BLOSSOMING OF A FLOWER, NATASHA?
"JUST WHO ARE YOU, NATASHA?"
"I AM... NIGHT."
ONLY ONE STRAIN OF SIMBIDIUM--AN UNCOMMON ORCHID WHICH CHOOSES TO BLOOM ONLY IN MOONLIGHT. I PREFER RARE BEAUTY, MR. WAYNE.
I AM INTRIGUED.
KNIGHT?
I AM... STARLIGHT... IN THE EBON VAULT OF THE SKY.
AND YOU ARE ALSO MORE THAN A TOUCH MELODRAMATIC.
ANOTHER QUALITY WHICH PLAYS POORLY DURING THE DAY.
UNLESS ONE IS ADDICTED TO THE SOAP OPERAS.
I SLEEP, MR. WAYNE, DURING THE DAY. HAVE YOU EVER TRIED IT?
CALL ME BRUCE... AND YES--I HAVE.
OH, MY.
NO WONDER VICKI VALE LEFT IN SUCH A TIFF.
THEN YOU CAN APPRECIATE THE SENSATION OF DWELLING IN DARKNESS AROUND THE CLOCK.
IF THE NIGHT IS MADE FOR DREAMS, YOU SEE, I PREFER TO EXPERIENCE THEM AWAKE.
AND DREAM AWAY THE DAY? WHICH DREAMS, THEN, ARE REAL?
7

THE ONES I CHOOSE TO MAKE REAL... UNDER THE STARS.
AND WHAT ABOUT THE PHILOSOPHY CONTENDING THAT DARKNESS IS EVIL?
"I FULLY A--. IT IS EVIL."
KASSHH
WHAT THE--?!!
EVERYTHING OF VALUE ON THE CURTAIN -- CASH, JEWELS -- NOW!
CAN'T SLIP AWAY TO BECOME THE BATMAN WITHOUT BEING NOTICED -- AND PERHAPS CAUSING SOMEONE TO BE INJURED...
YOU... YOU'RE THAT "NIGHT-THIEF" THEY'RE ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT!
THERE -- YOU FEEL RELIEVED OF YOUR ONEROUS BURDENS ALREADY, DO YOU NOT?
INDEED I AM -- AND TONIGHT YOU HAVE THE HONOR OF SERVING AS MY VICTIMS...
AH, BUT YOU, MY LADY... YOU MAY RETAIN YOUR ELEGANCE.
SHE -- SHE ACTUALLY SMILED AT HIM -- AND SHE'S NOT AT ALL FRIGHTENED.
8

# UNSCRAMBLE THE FUN
## AND DISCOVER WHY EVERYONE'S SCRAMBLING FOR NEW PINK LEMONADE BUBBLE YUM.®

Here's a game that's as much fun to play as Bubble Yum is to chew! Just unscramble these six mixed-up words. One letter to each square. (Answers below.)

FOST

SOTHOM

IYUJC

MYMYU

NIPK

LUBBESB

Now unscramble the circled letters to discover the surprise word in this Bubble Yum cartoon.

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ANSWERS: SOFT, SMOOTH, JUICY, YUMMY, PINK, BUBBLES. SURPRISE WORD: IT'S A MOUTHFUL OF YUM!

A PRODIGIOUS BURDEN, INDEED FOR WHICH I THANK EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.
HOLY CATS! A ROBBERY RIGHT HERE IN WAYNE MANOR!
YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS, I ASSURE YOU, WILL GO TO A GOOD CAUSE.
AND NOW, I MUST BID YOU A MOCKING FAREWELL...
FOR THE TIME TO RETURN TO THE NIGHT
THE BRAZEN AUDACITY OF THE MAN -- INVADING SOMEONE'S VERY HOME -- TERRORIZING US!
CALL THE POLICE!
THEY'LL BE CONFUSED AND OUTRAGED FOR A GOOD TEN MINUTES -- WHICH SOUNDS LIKE MY CUE...
MY RING -- IT WAS REAL EMERALD!
BUT, WHEN THE BATMAN HAS SECURED THE MANOR GROUNDS SOME FIVE MINUTES LATER...
I KNEW HE'D BE LONG GONE -- BUT I HOPED HE'D LEAVE BEHIND SOME CLUE...
SHOULD'VE KNOWN HE'D LIVE UP TO HIS REPUTATION AS A LIVING SHADOW -- VANISHED INTO THE DARK -- NOTHING BUT A FEW FOOTPRINTS LEFT BY JASON WHEN HE WAS OUT PLAYING...
AND NOW I'D BETTER GET BACK TO THE PARTY BEFORE BRUCE WAYNE IS NOTICED MISSING.

AND SO, A SHORT WHILE LATER...
..ASSURE YOU THAT IF THE VALUABLES ARE NOT RECOVERED, THE WAYNE FOUNDATION WILL MAKE RESTITUTION FOR ANYTHING NOT INSURED.
NOW, THE POLICE SHOULD BE HERE SOON, AND IF YOU'D BE GOOD ENOUGH TO COOPERATE IN ANSWERING THEIR QUESTIONS--
THE POLICE'VE ARRIVED, PRETTY BOY--AND WE'LL TAKE OVER FROM HERE.
NOW WHO WUZ ROBBED-- ALL O' YEZ?
HMPH, AIN'T A SINGLE ONE O' YA COULDN'T AFFORD TO BE ROB--
THAT'S ENOUGH BULLOCK! I'LL CONDUCT THIS INVESTIGATION -- AND YOU'LL WATCH. WITH YOUR FAT MOUTH SHUT!
NOW, WE'D LIKE TO INTERVIEW EACH OF YOU PRIVATELY--AND WHILE YOU'RE WAITING YOUR TURNS, PLEASE PREPARE A LIST OF ALL LOST VALUABLES.
GOOD WORK GORDON--GOT TO KEEP A TIGHT LEASH ON BULL-DOGS LIKE HIM.
NOW TO FIND LUCIUS
AND, AS COMMISSIONER GORDON CONDUCTS THE OFFICIAL INTERROGATION IN ANOTHER ROOM.
TELL ME ABOUT NATASHA KNIGHT, LUCIUS.
AS KNIGHT? WELL, FROM WHAT I'VE BEEN TOLD, BRUCE, A LASER EXPERIMENT AT HER OBSERVATORY WENT AWRY...
...THE RADIATION DOSE CAUSED A GRADUAL LOSS OF PIGMENTATION IN HER SKIN.
SHE RECENTLY SUBMITTED MEDICAL BILLS FOR COMPENSATION-- MOSTLY FROM DERMA-TOLOGISTS-- DATING BACK SEVERAL YEARS TO THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT.
WE'VE HELD UP ON THEM-- TO DISCERN IF SHE MIGHT BE ENTITLED TO EVEN FURTHER COMPENSATION.
10

HMM. THIS PARTY WAS NOT ANNOUNCED, WAS IT, LUCIUS? NO NOTICE IN THE SOCIETY PAGES OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?
NOTHING, BRUCE, EXCEPT PERSONAL INVITATIONS TO UPPER ECHELON EMPLOYEES -- AND YOUR OWN SMALL LIST OF FRIENDS.
I SEE. THANK YOU, LUCIUS. GIVE ME MS. KNIGHT'S HOME ADDRESS AND THE LOCATION OF THE OBSERVATORY BEYORE YOU LEAVE.
HOURS LATER, AT AN EXCLUSIVE TOWNHOUSE ON THE FAR SIDE OF GOTHAM...
...THE ELEGANT NOCTURNA RELIVES THE MEMORIES OF A VERY RECENT PARTY, REVIEWING MEMENTOS OF ITS SUCCESS...
BUT AS SHE TURNS ON THE NINTH SUCH MEMENTO--
-- THE [illegible] ARE SHATTERED LIKE A [illegible] ASSAULTED BY FORCE.
A PHILOSOPHY LIKE YOURS SHOULD NEVER BE SHARED, MS. KNIGHT. BRUCE WAYNE TOLD THE POLICE EVERYTHING.
(THE BATMAN!)
I THOUGHT I FELT A DRAFT...
BUT TO YOU, BATMAN, THE NAME IS NOCTURNA.
AND DESPITE MY ETHEREAL COMPLEXION, I IMAGINE THIS IS WHAT THEY CALL "RED-HANDED"?
YOU ROBBED YOUR FELLOW EMPLOYEES OF THE WAYNE FOUNDATION
WHY?

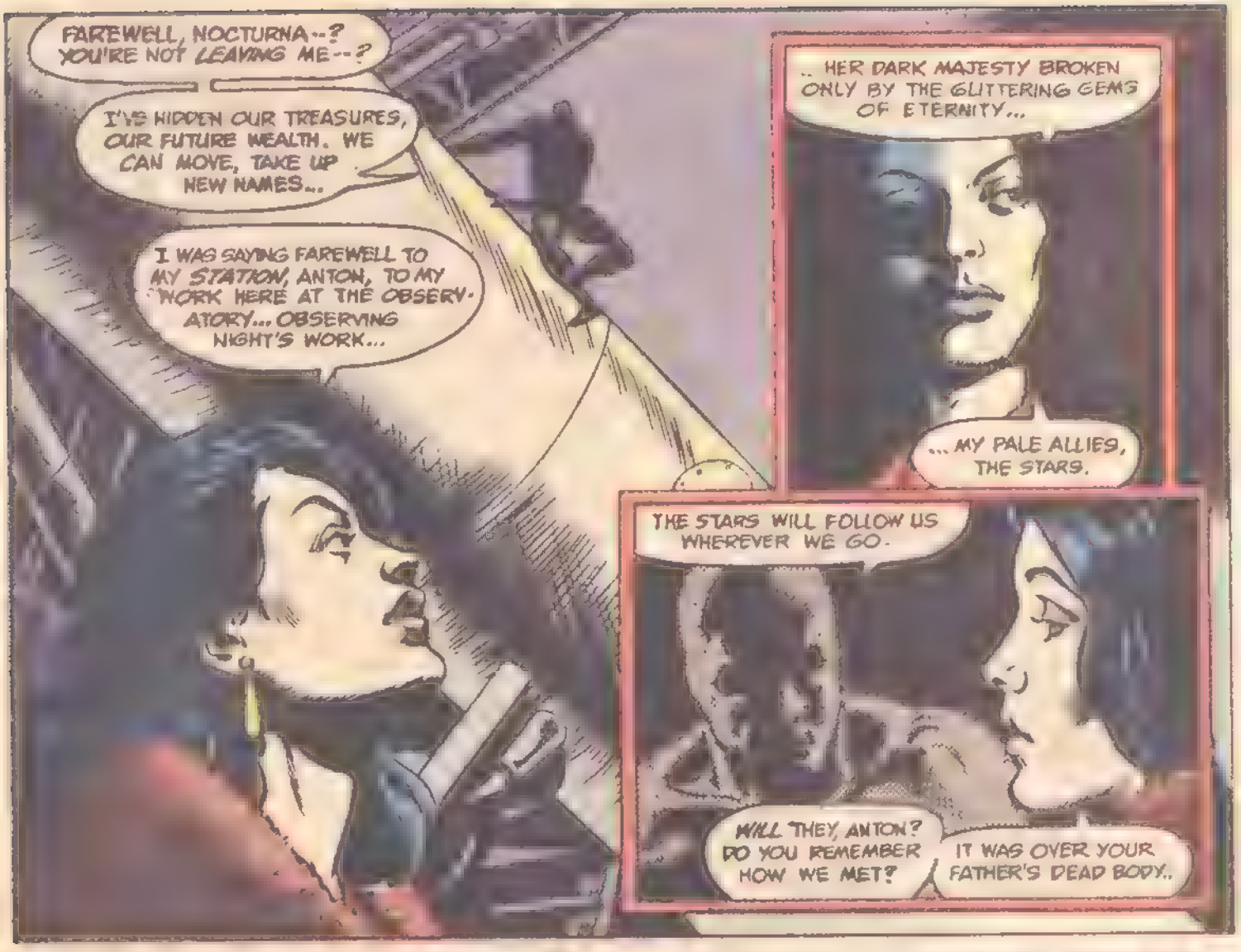
LET'S JUST SAY I DECIDED TO GIVE MYSELF A RAISE--OR AVAILED MYSELF OF SOME FRINGE BENEFITS...
...AND TAUGHT THE FOUNDATION A LESSON ABOUT DELINQUENCY IN COMPENSATIONS DUE.
AND THE REAL REASON--FOR THIS AND ALL THE OTHER CRIMES YOU AND YOUR SHADOWY PARTNER HAVE COMMITTED?
I AM ACCUSTOMED TO THE FINER THINGS IN LIFE, BATMAN, AND ELEGANCE IS AN ADDICTION--EVEN LONG AFTER THE MONEY RUNS OUT.
A PARADOX: THAT'S MY MOTIVE, TOO...
"I DID NOT BEGIN MY LIFE IN LUXURY--I WAS ORPHANED TO THE STREETS, LIVING JUST ONE STEP AHEAD OF THE POLICE AND CHILD WELFARE AUTHORITIES...
AN ORIGINAL MOTIVE, SINCE IT'S USUALLY POVERTY WHICH BREEDS CRIME.
"I WAS BEGGING--AND HE WAS A LIVING FANTASY
'..A MILLIONAIRE JAUNTILY CROSSES FROM A LIMOUSINE
12

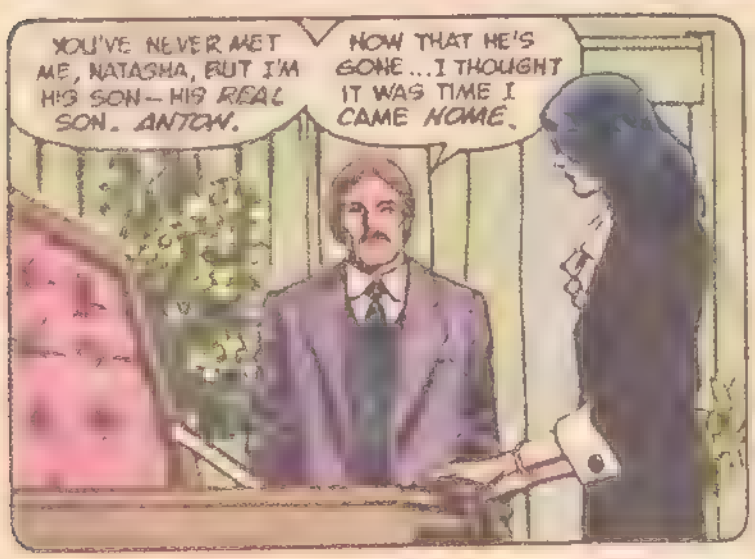
"ONE NIGHT YEARS LATER, WHEN I HAD MATURED INTO A YOUNG WOMAN, HE FAILED TO RETURN HOME.
"I PACED EVERY ROOM ON ALL THREE FLOORS, NEARLY OUT OF MY MIND WITH WORRY..
"THEN CAME THE KNOCK ON THE DOOR
I'M SORRY, MISS, BUT CHARLES KNIGHT HAS BEEN MURDERED BY FOUR MEMBERS OF A RIVAL GANG.
"IT WAS ONLY THEN THAT I LEARNED WHERE MY FATHER'S MONEY TRULY CAME FROM..
"...AND THAT OUR GOOD LIFE HAD BEEN FINANCED BY CRIME."
BUT ONCE I'D HAD A TASTE OF THAT LIFE, I COULDN'T GO BACK.
IF CRIME, AND THE NIGHT, BROUGHT ME ELEGANCE -- WHILE THE DAYLIGHT'S STRAIGHT AND NARROW PATH LED TO NOTHING BUT MISERY AND DEGRADATION.
WELL, LET'S JUST SAY... I DECIDED TO PURSUE ELEGANCE.
THERE'S SOMETHING IN MY NATURE, BATMAN, PERHAPS SOMETHING IN THE NATURE OF EVERYONE...
...WHICH EVER STRIVES FOR SOMETHING BETTER.
AND ONCE SOMETHING BETTER HAS BEEN ATTAINED, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO TAKE A STEP BACK DOWN TO ANYTHING LESS.
ONCE I'D OWNED A MERCEDES I COULD NEVER AGAIN BE SATISFIED WITH A...A VOLKSWAGEN. AFTER THE SWEET INTOXICATION OF THE FINEST CONCERT HALLS IN EUROPE, I COULD NEVER GO BACK TO A BEER HOUSE JUKE-JOINT.
AFTER THE SMOOTH, COOL CARESS OF PEARLS PASTE WOULD BURN MY SKIN.
ONCE I'D HEARD THE FINEST STEREO MONEY COULD BUY, A TRANSISTOR RADIO MERELY HURT MY EARS.
AND THE ACCIDENT WHICH TURNED MY SKIN PALLID AND RENDERED ME HYPER-SENSITIVE TO LIGHT ONLY REINFORCED MY DEVOTION TO THE NIGHT AND ITS ELEGANCE.
DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR, BATMAN?
13

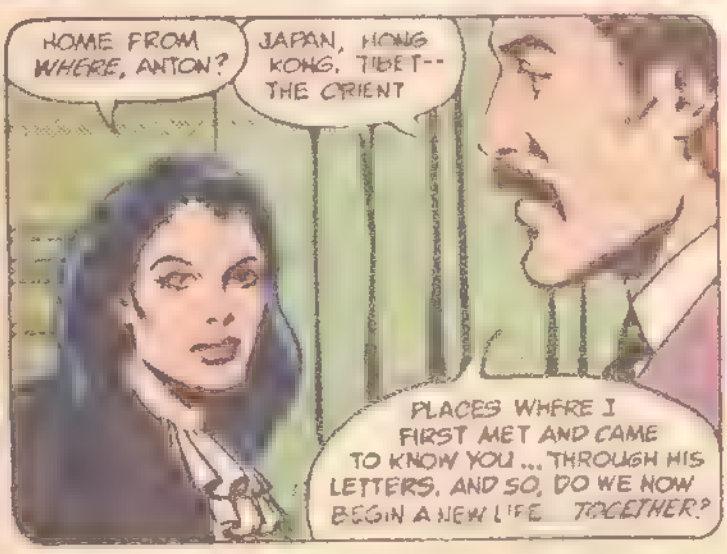
YOU'RE SPOILED.
I AM APPRECIATIVE OF QUALITY, WITH INTENSITY OF EXPERIENCE -- AND THE ESCALATION OF IT. WERE I A DRUG USER, I COULD NEVER STOP WITH THE FIRST POP OR PILL.
AND IF YOU'D HAD A GOURMET FEAST LAST WEEK, WOULD YOU RATHER STARVE THAN EAT HAMBURGER TODAY?
NO.. BUT THE MEAL WOULD HARDLY MAKE FOR AN ENCHANTED DINNER PARTY -- AND I LIVE FOR ENCHANTMENT.
YOU'VE BEEN POISONED BY WEALTH, NOCTURNA.
AND WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN POISONED BY? DO YOU LIVE IN A HOVEL, BATMAN? EXCUSE ME, OF COURSE NOT -- YOU HANG UPSIDE-DOWN IN A BELFRY.
YOU'VE BEEN POISONED BY MORE THAN YOUR ADOPTIVE FATHER'S WEALTH -- BY HIS VERY CRIMINAL NATURE.
I NEVER KNEW HE WAS A CRIMINAL... UNTIL HE DIED.
BUT YOU KNEW HIS ATTITUDE -- AND YOU IDOLIZED HIM.
WE BOTH IDOLIZED HIM, BATMAN.
NOW KEEP YOUR HANDS HIGH -- OR THIS IS WHERE OUR NIGHT-GAME COMPETITIONS END.
NO, ANTON.. DON'T HARM HIM.
HE IS A KINDRED SPIRIT OF THE NIGHT.
BESIDES, YOU STEAL THE NIGHT NOT JUST FOR ME...
THERE IS THE ADDED THRILL OF OUTWITTING THE BATMAN...

...A THRILL WE DO NOT WISH TO END...
...PERMANENTLY.
KOFF!
AGH-H!
FAREWELL, BATMAN...
DREAM SWEETLY... IN DARKNESS.
JUST AS SOON AS THE DOOR CLOSES SHUT...
KNOCKOUT POWDER.
GOOD THING I EXPECTED SOMETHING LIKE THAT FROM HER...
...AND HELD MY BREATH AT THE LAST MOMENT, OR I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO—
JASON--?!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, BATMAN?! I WAS AFRAID THEY--
I'M FINE--BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
15

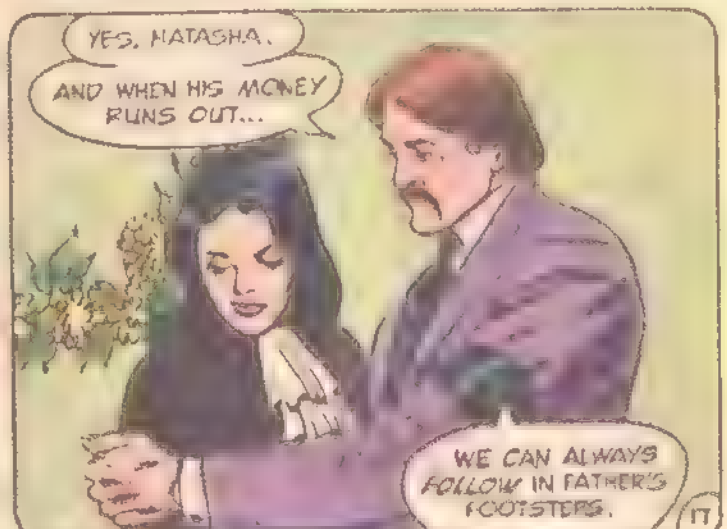
IT'S SIMPLE -- I FOLLOWED THE NIGHT-THIEF FROM WAYNE MANOR, I WAS ABOUT TO GO BACK AND GET YOU, BUT THEN I SAW YOU GO THROUGH THE WINDOW HERE...
YOU NEVER SHOULD HAVE TRIED SUCH A FOOL STUNT, JAY...
WHY NOT? I DID IT -- FOLLOWED HIM ALL THE WAY HERE, WHICH IS MORE THAN YOU DID.
LISTEN TO ME, JAY. I WANT YOU TO GET BACK HOME TO ALFRED -- NOW -- AND STAY THERE.
YEAH? THEN I GUESS YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW WHAT I OVERHEARD THEM SAYING AS THEY LEFT JUST NOW...
WHAT?
IF I TELL, WILL YOU LET ME GO WITH YOU?
NO! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS, JASON -- YOU'RE TOO YOUNG.
NOW TELL ME -- AND THEN GO HOME.
ALL RIGHT...
BUT IT'S THE LAST TIME I'LL EVER HELP YOU. NIGHT-THIEF WENT TO STASH THE LOOT SOMEWHERE, AND THE WOMAN WILL BE WAITING AT "THE OBSERVATORY," WHEREVER THAT IS.
AND I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING...
I ALMOST HOPE THEY GET AWAY.
THE GOTHAM OBSERVATORY...
AND HOW DOES ONE SAY FAREWELL TO THE NIGHT?
YOU PRESERVED YOUR SECRETS, YOUR ALLURE, EVEN UNDER THE CLOSEST SCRUTINY...
I'VE BARELY LEARNED THE SLOWLY SHIFTING FEATURES OF YOUR VAST FACE, THE DEPTHS OF YOUR LIMITLESS [illegible]...
AND NOW .. NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY FAREWELL...


FAREWELL, NOCTURNA--? YOU'RE NOT LEAVING ME--?
I'VE HIDDEN OUR TREASURES, OUR FUTURE WEALTH. WE CAN MOVE, TAKE UP NEW NAMES...
I WAS SAYING FAREWELL TO MY STATION, ANTON, TO MY WORK HERE AT THE OBSERVATORY... OBSERVING NIGHT'S WORK...
.. HER DARK MAJESTY BROKEN ONLY BY THE GLITTERING GEMS OF ETERNITY...
... MY PALE ALLIES, THE STARS.
THE STARS WILL FOLLOW US WHEREVER WE GO.
WILL THEY, ANTON? DO YOU REMEMBER HOW WE MET?
IT WAS OVER YOUR FATHER'S DEAD BODY..


YOU'VE NEVER MET ME, NATASHA, BUT I'M HIS SON -- HIS REAL SON. ANTON.
NOW THAT HE'S GONE ... I THOUGHT IT WAS TIME I CAME HOME.


HOME FROM WHERE, ANTON?
JAPAN, HONG KONG, TIBET -- THE ORIENT
PLACES WHERE I FIRST MET AND CAME TO KNOW YOU ... THROUGH HIS LETTERS. AND SO, DO WE NOW BEGIN A NEW LIFE TOGETHER?

THERE IS NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN, ANTON ... BUT IN DARKNESS, ONE NEVER KNOWS.
DID YOU KNOW... ABOUT YOUR FATHER'S AFFAIRS?


YES, NATASHA.
AND WHEN HIS MONEY RUNS OUT...
WE CAN ALWAYS FOLLOW IN FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS.

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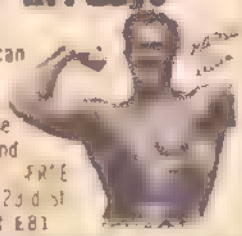

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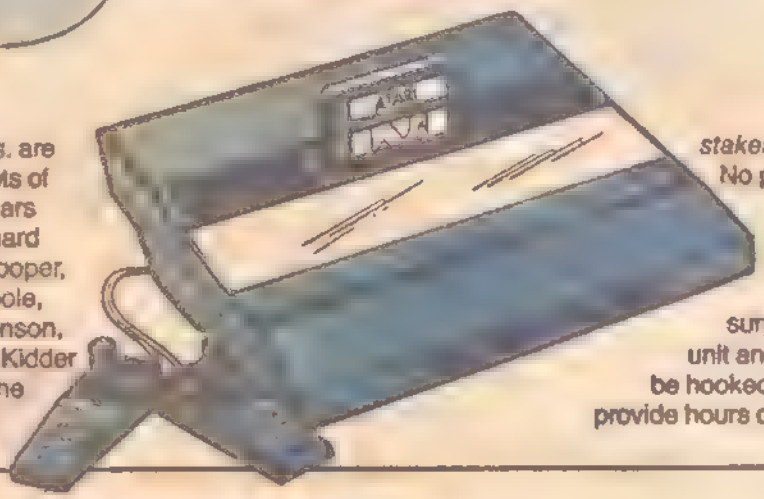

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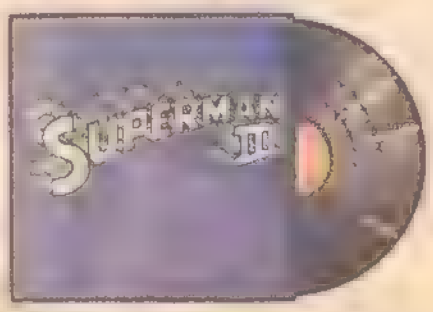

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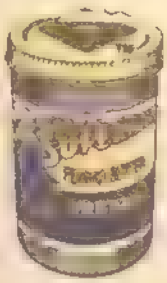

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All entries which are received prior to 5:00 PM July 29, 1983 are eligible for inclusion in a single random drawing for one first prize, fifty second prizes, one hundred third prizes, one hundred fourth prizes and one hundred fifth prizes. The first 2,500 entries received by us will automatically receive, by mail, a free copy of the official *Superman III* movie poster.

Only one prize awarded per entrant.

Receiving a *Superman III* movie poster will not disqualify an entrant from winning one of the other prizes.

This sweepstakes is open to all residents of the United States except employees or agents of Warner Communications Inc. or any of its divisions, subsidiaries or affiliates and members of their immediate families, advertising, promotion and service agencies. This sweepstakes is void wherever prohibited by law.

The odds of winning one of the prizes to be awarded will be determined by the number of entries received by 5:00 PM July 29, 1983. All prizes will be awarded. No substitutions of prizes will be permitted. Taxes, where applicable, will be the sole responsibility of the prize winner.

Entrants need not be present to win. All winners will be officially notified by mail. A list of winners will be available to anyone who sends a stamped, self-addressed envelope to *Superman III Movie Sweepstakes*, PO Box 1308-F Dept. T, Fort Lee, NJ 07024.

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I REMEMBER, NOCTURNA. EVEN THEN, YOU LOVED THE NIGHT... EVEN BEFORE THE LIGHT CURSED YOU. AND WE MUST GO ON LOVING THE--
NO, ANTON, JUST BEFORE YOU CAME... A STAR FELL FROM THE HEAVENS.
ITS PATH WAS CLEAR.
I HAVE MADE PREPARATIONS, BUT EVEN THEY MAY NOT BE ENOUGH.
THE BATMAN KNOWS WHO WE ARE, AND HE WILL SOON BE--
--HERE.
I AM MYSELF A CREATURE OF THE NIGHT, THIEVES...
...AND I THINK IT'S TIME OUR LITTLE "COMPETITION" WAS
CLOSE APERTURE
...BEFORE THE DAWN.
GOT TO GET OUT BEFORE THE APERTURE CLOSES!
I'LL BE BACK, NOCTURNA--TO STEAL YOU FROM HIS CLUTCHES!

WAKT
WHY WAIT UNTIL LATER, THIEF?
LET'S FIGHT OVER HER RIGHT HERE... RIGHT NOW.
DO IT, ANTON -- DO IT.

SLOWLY, SERENELY, AS IT IS WONT TO DO BEYOND THE WALLS OF METALLIC CANYONS, THE MAJESTY OF NIGHT IS ECLIPSED...
...UNTIL THE BATMAN CEASES TO EXIST EVEN THE CONCEPT OF DARKNESS...
--TO DEFINE THE QUICK, CRUEL MOVES OF A LIVING SHADOW.
HE'S SPENT TIME IN THE ORIENT, ALL RIGHT...
...MOVES LIKE A MASTER SENSEI...
...AND THEN HE'S GONE, BEFORE I CAN--
CHAT
IT'S INSANE! EVERY TIME I TRY TO COUNTER--
--HE FADES AWAY--
--ONLY TO RETURN WITH AN EVEN DEADLIER ATTACK!
20

LEVEL 1
CAN'T LET HIM CONTINUE TO USE THE DARKNESS AGAINST ME...
GOT TO EQUALIZE THE FIGHT.
LIGHT KILLS THE DARKNESS.
AND THE BATMAN ALMOST SMILES AT THE IRONY OF IT...
...WHILE HIS DAZZLED QUARRY FINDS NOWHERE TO RUN, FEWER PLACES TO HIDE...
...NO WAY TO EVADE THE INEVITABLE...
...NO WAY TO DODGE THE BATMAN'S THUNDERBOLTS OF VENGEANCE.
PUNCH
AND SO, LIKE THE DARKNESS, HE FALLS.



CONTINUED ON 3 OF PAGE FOLLOWING

# "WHEN THE LAW IS NOT ENOUGH... MY JUSTICE BEGINS."

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Dear Mom,

I know, I **KNOW** .. I haven't written or called in weeks. And I know that I always tell you I've been busy and you always say "You're **always** busy!" (I should think by now you'd be accustomed to it.) Anyway, I truly am sorry it's been so long since you've heard from me, but I've truly been extra busy. As you know, the conductors union's strike against Metro North, the commuter railroad I take into New York City each day, is into its second month. Many of us have found it nearly impossible to get back and forth and I've been staying in a hotel near the office during the week, driving in on Monday and home on Thursday or Friday. I've been spending 12 hours or so up at DC each day I'm in town and getting a lot done.

What I've been working on is 1984 DC Comics scheduled an exciting array of comics for 1983 .. 10 annuals, a slew of new titles, Maxi-Series, Mini-Series, Graphic Novels, DC/Marvel team-ups, a high-quality reprint series and several high-quality, new format titles. (Have you seen Frank Miller's **Ronin**? nifty, what?) We've had some serious time problems getting these books done. The creative people, in response to the demands of our readers for ever better comics, have slowed down their normal rate of production in order to spend more time on each page, each drawing, each cover. Their goals are quality, not quantity and they know quality takes time. In addition to this, DC Comics moved its offices in December. You remember how messy things were when you moved from New York to Stratford recently, how long it was before your new place was functional, how much effort and money it took to make it happen? Well, moving offices for about 50 people is **much** worse. And we lost a **lot** of time. And by the time we were **truly** functional again, it was holiday time and we lost some more time, and our riddled schedule lay tattered upon the floor .. a victim of unforeseen circumstances.

Fortunately, the people at DC are all pros .. our Editors, Promotion and Marketing people, Joe Orlando, Paul Levitz, Jenette Kahn, all pitched in to dig us out. Words of encouragement, screams of anguish and words of criticism combined in just the right quantities kept things moving .. later than we planned, but moving. We've made our initial launches (quite successfully, I might add) of **Omega Men; Ronin; Amethyst, Princess of Gem World; Batman and the Outsiders** and **Green Arrow** Mini-Series. On the launch pad is **Vigilante; Star Raiders** (our first graphic novel), **Thriller**; the **Superman III** movie adaptation, **New Talent Showcase**; and our first annuals. Being readied are **Star Trek**; The **JLA/Avengers** team-up, **Warlords** (our second graphic novel), and the balance of the annuals. Later in the year; **Teen Titans/X-Men #2**; **The Redeemer**; (Joe Kubert's first series in years!); **Atari Force**, (Jose Garcia Lopez's first regular assignment. Check into the Star Raiders graphic novel to see the enormity of this man's talent. Co-created and written by one of my favorites, Gerry Conway.) **Infinity, Inc.** (Roy Thomas, Jerry Ordway and Mike Machlin's new Earth II entry), and **Nathaniel Dusk**, a Mini-Series by Don McGregor and Gene Colan. By this time, incidentally, the newsprint line will probably shift to the better **Mando** paper. Well, we've got some time problems but it looks like we'll make all the above. Certainly I've already done most of what I'm capable of doing to make it happen. I'm sure you'll be proud of me.

And of course that brings me to 1984 .. and what can we do for an encore? Time problems aside, 1983 is bound to be our best recent year, if not our best ever! And if you buy into the theory that you get better or you get worse (I do!), you'll realize that 1984 provides DC Comics with both a difficult challenge and a wonderful opportunity. (You know I've never turned away from a challenge, mom. Remember the bloody noses I brought home from school?)

Okay, what to do? Obviously, I can't lock into a 1984 schedule this early, but I can set goals. In general, then, in 1984 we should:

1) Launch 4 to 6 new titles
2) Start 2 to 4 new Maxi-Series
3) Release 4 to 8 graphic novels
4) Begin a revitalization program for our older, regular titles
5) Add some humor titles primarily for our younger readers
6) Create a publication especially for our female audience (No, Gloria .. we don't mean icky romance comics!)
7) Sprinkle all of the above liberally with Mini-Series .. some featuring current DC characters, some featuring brand new concepts and characters
8) Create a format to utilize the characters recently acquired from Charlton Comics Group

To turn these goals into realities, I've been talking to all our current creative contributors, looking at concepts contributed by people not now part of our staff, and I am currently involved in a major restructuring of our in-house staff so that we can better utilize our creative strengths and improve our administrative efficiency. An example of the last: Ernie Colon has left our staff as an Editor to return to freelancing. Ernie will continue to edit several titles from home but this shift will allow him to draw **Amethyst** (a recently launched Maxi-Series that is doing quite well) on time and start work on a graphic novel that Ernie has written and will draw. Ernie's desk in DC's office will be taken over by Alan Gold, an experienced Editor (though not in comics) recommended by Marv Wolfman. (Take a bow, Alan.)

What else? We could conclude talks this week with Conway and Broderick re A **Firestorm** graphic novel; Jenette has accepted a new concept from newcomer Gregg Potter. Really great. More about this when we choose an artist and draw up contracts, two other Mini-Series ideas tentatively approved, one by Robert Loren Fleming, one by Marv Wolfman .. I'm sure you get the idea. Anyway I can't be too much more specific right now. Some of the creative people have promised me bodily damage if I divulge too much, too soon .. and this is definitely "too soon".

I hope I haven't bored you by rambling on this way. I just wanted to impart some sense of the effort, energy and enthusiasm generated by the people here at DC and why my commitment to them can be no less than total. Yes, I'm very busy .. but so is everyone else and I bet their Moms are no happier than you. I'll write (or call) again soon. Kiss Dad for me. Thank you and good afternoon.

Your Son,

Dick

P.S. Call Marie and tell her I'll be home on Friday this week. I have a late Thursday meeting with .. Aw, shucks, I **really** can't tell you with whom. Sorry.

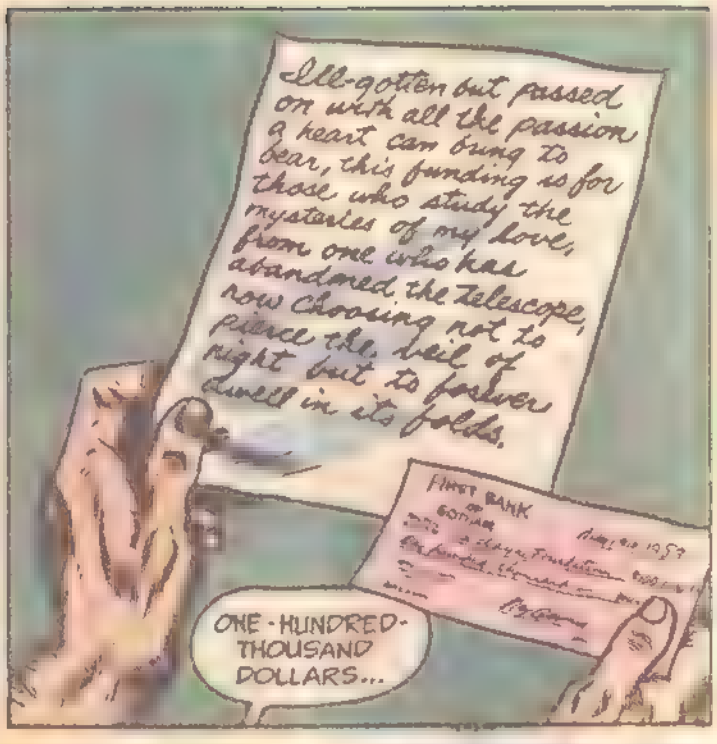
To whom it may concern:

I walked into Dick's office looking for the new "Meanwhile" column. Dick wasn't in and a search for the copy turned up nothing but the above letter. If I don't get **something** to the typesetter **today**, we print a **blank** page! So .. it's this dumb letter to Mom or **nothing!**

Bob Rozakis
DC Production Manager

BUT THEN, LOOKING QUICKLY AROUND, THE DARKNIGHT DETECTIVE FINDS--
NOCTURNA'S GONE... BUT THE DOORS ARE STILL LOCKED--FROM THE INSIDE...
EH--?
THE APERTURE--IT'S OPEN AGAIN...
FAREWELL, BATMAN--UNTIL THE NIGHT AGAIN BRINGS US TOGETHER...
THAT VOICE--IT'S HER! BUT WHERE--?
THE GLISTENING WHITE ARCS OF THE MOON TELLS THE TALE: A THIEF OF NIGHT HAS BEEN CAPTURED...
...BUT NIGHT HERSELF, AS ELUSIVE AS THE BEAUTY OF A WOMAN GLIMPSED AGAR, HAS SLIPPED AWAY...
...FREE UNTIL THE DAWN.
DAMN HER.
DAMN THE NIGHT.
22

EPILOGUE ONE:
LATER...
BEFORE YOU CHANGE FOR YOUR PATROL, SIR, WE HAVE APPARENTLY HAD A MIDNIGHT DELIVERY...
I JUST NOTICED THIS UNDER THE FRONT DOOR-- IT'S FOR YOU.


Ill-gotten but passed on with all the passion a heart can bring to bear, this funding is for those who study the mysteries of my love, from one who has abandoned the telescope, now choosing not to pierce the veil of night but to forever dwell in its folds.
FIRST BANK OF GOTHAM
ONE-HUNDRED-THOUSAND DOLLARS...

A BEQUEST TO THE OBSERVATORY-- FROM NOCTURNA.
I REFUSE TO ACCEPT IT, ALFRED -- BOTH HER STOLEN MONEY AND HER ESCAPE.
YES, SIR -- I WOULD ASSUME AS MUCH.

EPILOGUE TWO:
--ON THE DOCKS, WALDO?
GOOD.
'BYE.

AT NIGHT...
... NOT EVERY CONVERSATION WITH A CLOWN IS FUNNY.
IN THE NEXT DETECTIVE: AGAINST THE FALL OF NOCTURNA. AND IN THE NEXT BATMAN: CHIMERA.

Dear Editor:

BATMAN #360 ("When Slays the Savage Skull") contained an average villain (homicidal maniacs ARE average villains in today's ever-improving comics field) but an extraordinary presentation style. Doug Moench seems to know exactly what he's doing, and Don Newton still does, so there shouldn't be any slackening off due to Mr. Conway's departure.

Pages 4-6 were the most intriguing—not only must you be strong to *be* the Batman, apparently Jason is finding out the hard truth that you must be strong even to live with and try to understand the Batman—this most complex of hard but good men.

Perhaps one little change that can be made is a lightening of Alfred's character. I can understand that too much humor might interfere with the usually grim story taxis, but I have trouble seeing Alfred as a totally somber man, like his employer. I liked the old stories where he played detective himself and always came out ahead (sometimes through no efforts of his own). Perhaps a happy medium can be reached—what does Alfred have to be so sad about, anyway?

Sincerely,
Charles D. Brown
39 Stockton St.
Brentwood, NY 11717

*That's a good question, Charles. We'll leave it open for Doug to chew on. We remember fondly the "Outsider" series of stories many years ago in which the "deceased" Alfred returned as a mysterious villain who possessed complete knowledge of the Dynamic Duo's secret lives. Mr. Pennyworth eventually regained his memory and his dignified composure, but it was sure fun while it lasted! Thanks for reminding us that there are great story opportunities no further away than the pantry!*

* * * * *

Dear Len:

DETECTIVE #526 was great.

Now, two weeks later, BATMAN #360.

I will accept the fact that Jason comes from a circus background like Dick. I will accept the fact that Jason's parents were killed, as were Dick's. I will accept the fact that Jason will become Robin like Dick. I will NOT accept Jason's hairstyle. Those two curls on his forehead are too big of a coincidence.

John Brittan
11 Fleetwood Dr.
Daly City, CA 94015

*Would you believe that Jason patronizes the same barber as Dick?*

* * * * *

Dear Doug,

Thank God you showed up in time! What with murderous crocodile/humans, Elmer Fudd rejects and what-not running around this mag lately, we've needed some hardcore realism around here.

I've been reading your Moon Knight for over a year now and enjoy immensely the way you handle the character. I must say that your MK tops all Marvel and DC mags, including X-MEN, DAREDEVIL, THE NEW TEEN TITANS, etc. You are the best writer in comics today.

Now before you start blushing, let me tell you what my feelings are on BATMAN #360's "When Slays the Savage Skull..." Since I began reading BATMAN at the age of five and up to now, eight years later, with 94 consecutive issues and tons of back issues, including O'Neil/Adams collaborations, nothing has come close to the quality of this story. Pages 1-3, 9-12, 14-23 were excellently portrayed (not to mention excellently *drawn* by Don Newton, Pablo Marcos and Ron Randall—great, men!). From the subplots with Jason, Gordon and Hill to the pictures and the "Savage Skull will slay" on the killer's wall, this is one helluva way to start off on a floundering title.

May your tenure on BATMAN be a long one.

Your #1 fan,
Joe Paone
12511 Biscayne Dr.
Philadelphia, PA 19154

P.S. Now you can blush.

*Color Doug red, Joe, and color us puzzled! For one thing, who was floundering?! We guess that you mean the episode in which the Batman was plunged into the tank with the gigantic squid...*

* * * * *

Dear Len & Doug:

Doug Moench's debut on the Darknight Detective's own comic was gracefully handled, as the transition from Gerry Conway was minimal at best. "When Slays the Savage Skull" was a dynamite story, much better than his recent WORLD'S FINEST outings, as this was a story suited for the Batman and his world. I knew that with his strong-story Moon Knight background, Doug would just have to excel with Batman. The Savage Skull is a villain who easily would have fit into either nocturnal hero's world. However, BATMAN is the better home for him since this hero has a much stronger connection with the police department, especially with its commissioner, one James W. Gordon. And it was with Gordon that Doug displayed that he is also quite capable of handling the supporting cast. Conway put Jim through quite a bit during his tenure and he was just beginning with his health problems. I was very happy to see the way that Doug picked right up on this, plus carrying it forward. My only disappointment with this story was the total absence of both Selina and Vicki, especially in light of the fact that this is supposed to be a month after the historic 500th appearance DETECTIVE COMICS issue. Dick's absence is easily explained as he hasn't been too active here anyway as his life with the new Teen Titans has kept the Teen Wonder very busy. My second complaint runs along the same lines as Dustan Leary's who has also noted that many times Batman is portrayed as "being just a Superman who can't fly!" This time Doug had our Caped Crusader going twenty-four hours without food or rest and hardly showing any signs for the worse as he easily disarmed and defeated Skull. In the future, I would hope that this super-heroic aspect is played down. One of the things which is so appealing about the Batman over other heroes is that he is a man with no space-born, alien-granted or scientifically-induced powers, and as a normal man, he shows us that he can win.

The art of Newton, Marcos and Randall was excellent! Don's pencils on this character are very masterful and, coupled with a pair of inkers the caliber of Marcos and Randall, you just know that you're going to be treated to some exceptional, moody, atmospheric and masterful art!

Sincerely yours,
Kent A. Phenis
1321 North Meridian St.
Apt. 913
Indianapolis, IN 46202

* * * * *

*Finally, we want to remind all of you to be on the lookout for BATMAN & THE OUTSIDERS, our new companion book in which Batman forms his own super-hero group and kicks some assumptions about team books! It's written by Mike W. Barr, drawn by Jim Aparo and edited by Bat-editor Len Wein. And in case you've been out of the country for the last couple years, that means it's* good!

* * * * *

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